Heatwave

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/18546484.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Categories:	M/M, Other
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham
Additional Tags:	Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics, Mating Cycles/In Heat, First Time, Knotting, Alpha Will Graham, Omega Hannibal Lecter, Wet & Messy, Come Marking, Large Cock, Dirty Talk, Explicit Sexual Content, Established Relationship, Age Difference, Humor, mpreg mentions but no mpreg, Nonbinary Character, Genderfluid Will Graham, Young Will Graham, Alternate Universe - Gender Changes, Alternate Universe of an Alternate Universe, Illustrations
Language:	English
Series:	Part 6 of Quicksilver Timestamps
Collections:	JustFuckMeUp 2019, My Escapism List
Stats:	Published: 2019-04-21 Words: 10,509 Chapters: 1/1

Heatwave

by Weconqueratdawn

Summary

Written for the #justfuckmeup kink fest from Hannibal Cre-Ate-Ive.

Hannibal stops taking his suppressants without consulting Will. A weekend of hedonism and humour follows - could it lead to an update in relationship status too?

In the living room, he found Hannibal seated behind the desk. He'd loosened his tie and undone the top two buttons of his shirt. His colour was high and his scent was thick in Will's mouth. He must be uncomfortable in his well-fitted suit.

'Good', Will thought vindictively. 'That'll serve him right.'

Belongs in the Quicksilver AU where Will is young and genderfluid - an AU of an AU which can be read with no knowledge of the original.

Illustrated by the marvellous TheSeaVoices!!

Notes

This is brand new territory for me--generally speaking, omegaverse isn't something I'm into but one day QS Will said *hey wouldn't *this* be fun??* and he's very difficult to deny. Then along came the #justfuckmeup fest and it seemed the perfect moment to branch out :D

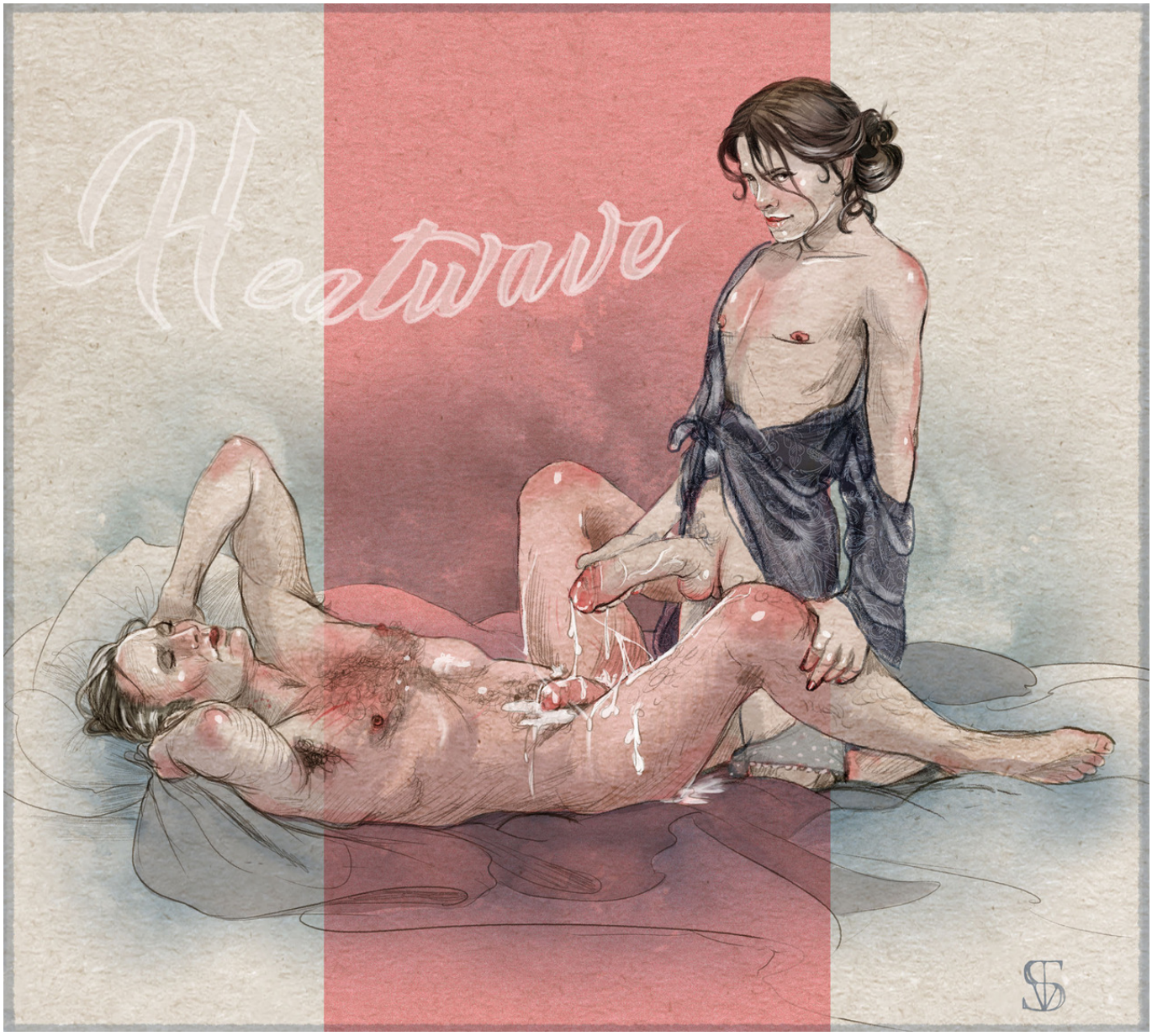
Warnings
There's an allusion to a past encounter of Hannibal's which falls into dubcon territory and there's also one very positive and appreciative use of the word 'slut'. Take care if needed/drop me a query in the comments/DM me on Twitter if you need more info.

A note on pronouns
I use he/him pronouns for Will, mainly because that's how Hannibal chooses to address him when they're alone. Will is comfortable with all pronouns and favours none over the other.

Thanks to teacup for helicoptering in with grammatical advice :)

Finally, my everlasting love and devotion to TheSeaVoices for being such good fun to work and play with. You'd better brace yourselves for this pic because :D :D :D

See the end of the work for more notes



Another Friday night at Hannibal's--Will let himself in with his key and shook the rain off his coat and hair. The coat he hung in the closet to dry but he couldn't do much about his hair. Left to its own devices it became unruly, especially now it was long, and he couldn't be bothered with fixing it now. It didn't matter; it was Friday night. There a whole weekend of Hannibal ahead--a whole weekend of tumbled bedclothes, tangled limbs, and hair even more unruly than this.

With a burst of happy anticipation, he took his bag through and stuck his head into the kitchen.

"I'm here," he said. "Sorry I'm a bit late--Professor Crawford wanted a word."

Hannibal, of course, had known he'd arrived the second Will had stepped inside his front door. Perhaps even earlier than that. His sense of smell was unusually acute and it had been trained on Will for well over a year. He claimed he could tell which objects Will had touched in his office and in what order; he said Will's scent left a trail in the air like bright, wind-blown leaves. Will half-believed this, but also suspected him of whipping up romantic fantasies for his own amusement.

“Will.” It was Hannibal’s customary greeting--short, warm, surprisingly intense. He was up to his wrists in a bowl of bright pink meat, minced lamb with spices. It smelled ripe and rich, undercut with lemon and something else Will couldn’t quite place. “And what did Jack want this time?” he said, pinching off a morsel of the mixture and rolling it into a ball.

“Oh, the usual. You know he likes to keep an eye on me.”

“His protégé,” Hannibal said. “Youngest and cleverest in the class.”

Instead of replying, Will gave him a withering look, one Hannibal pretended not to see. He couldn’t speak of Professor Crawford and Will together without a possessiveness creeping into his voice. Anyone listening would assume both him and Professor Crawford were two soap-opera alphas fighting over an omega. Sometimes, Hannibal certainly acted that way.

Will held up his bag. “Just taking this upstairs then I’ll be back down.”

Hannibal’s bedroom was probably Will’s favourite place in the world. It was serene without being lofty and dark without being enclosed. At night, with the lights turned low, it was like being at sea in the gloaming, the white bed a raft drifting on deep, calm waters. Here Hannibal’s scent was strongest. Will allowed himself the indulgence of bending to sniff his pillow. This was the place they slept together, Hannibal tucked into Will’s side, belonging to him and no one else. At times like that, with only the samurai armour to watch over their dreams, the room seemed to be their own private kingdom.

At other times, it seemed so intensely Hannibal it was all Will could do not to break out in laughter. The dressing room, for example. Will’s father had been in the Navy and as a consequence Will knew how to be tidy, especially in a small space and with few belongings. But life had its complications and weeds flourished in the cracks--and if you mixed in exotic blooms too, the effect could be entertaining, or at least until it devolved into a big old mess. Hannibal’s life appeared to have no cracks or weeds, and his dressing room certainly didn’t. It was pristine--a perfect marriage of form and function.

Will had been granted use of some of this hallowed space. Among the racks of colour-coded suits hung a small selection of evening wear--a smattering of feminine tailoring and a single shift dress Will hadn’t quite found the courage to wear out. His dress choices would have been more palatable to the opera-loving public if only he’d had the good sense to have been born an omega. But there wasn’t much he could do about that, and neither was he inclined to waste time struggling to conform to their stuffy, outmoded views. Hannibal didn’t care: Hannibal encouraged him to be whatever he felt like being from day to day. Hannibal had bought him the dress.

The other exotic blooms Hannibal had gifted him with were loosely folded in drawers--scraps of silk and lace, things held together with slender straps, things which barely contained him when aroused. To these Will added his own more humble offerings, brought with him from home for the weekend--printed cotton briefs, a couple of pairs of jeans, an oversize shirt which could double as a dress, a sloppy sweater.

Once his clothes were stored away and his makeup bag placed in the bathroom next door, he was finished. Everything else already had a home here--phone charger in the nightstand, toothbrush by the sink, weekend reading on the coffee table. Will had slotted into Hannibal’s life as easy as winking. Sometimes he thought he should feel more surprised about that. From the outside they appeared mismatched, with more than twenty years between them and Hannibal’s elegant urbanity at odds with Will’s almost perverse rusticism. But both urbanity and rusticism were a ruse--honest

ones, but a ruse still. Neither of them fit in; their tastes were a declaration of difference, and in their difference they were the same.

Back down the stairs he went, and into the kitchen again. But Hannibal held up a hand, halting Will in his tracks before he could come any closer.

Hannibal pointed towards the leather armchair in the corner. “You’d better sit there for a while,” he said. “Nothing to be concerned about--you’ll understand why in a minute.”

Will frowned. Something was tugging on his mind, right at the back of his brain. It came to him when he sat down--the smell he couldn’t place, hiding beneath the lamb and the spices. He realised what it was at exactly the same time as Hannibal spoke.

“I stopped taking my suppressants,” he said. “The last was yesterday morning.”

“Um,” Will said. “Excuse me?”

Hannibal calmly unrolled his sleeves and refastened his cuffs. “If you choose, we can continue our evening the same as always.” He looked at Will then--spotlit from above he was as still as stone. “As of now, I have missed only one dose and can easily go upstairs and make up for it.”

Several different trains of thought crowded Will’s brain, clamouring for attention, but he couldn’t voice them yet. He seemed to be stuck on the barest facts. “You did *what*? But *why*? Why not talk to me first?”

“We can talk about it now,” Hannibal said.

Will’s mouth was hanging open; Hannibal’s audacity was quite incredible. He shut it with a snap. “Well I guess we’re going to have to, aren’t we?”

A shadow of amusement passed over Hannibal’s face.

“I’m glad you’re finding this funny,” Will said. “You know how unfair it is to spring this on me--I’m already having trouble concentrating.”

The unconcealed scent of an unbonded omega was a rare one--many alphas were still only confronted with it on their wedding night. Hannibal’s was now rolling across the room in waves, amplified many times greater than the scent on his pillow. Will dug his fingers into the chair’s leather, feeling assaulted both by it and the first stirrings of his arousal.

Hannibal took off his apron and folded it neatly. He was leaning against the counter, looking directly at Will, when he said: “I think it’s time. I want you to mate me.”

Will took in a sharp breath. It was the dirtiest thing Hannibal had ever said to him; it also brought an inexplicable lump to his throat. Under other circumstances, this was a conversation Will would gladly have had. Under these circumstances, however, he knew the time available for rational conversation was strictly limited.

“You want me to put a baby in you?” he said, through gritted teeth. “Get you knocked up, is that it? What the fuck, Hannibal?”

Hannibal, still on the other side of the kitchen, somehow managed to loom large in Will’s vision. Or maybe it was simply the effect of his scent on the primal part of Will’s brain.

“Some day, yes,” he said calmly. “My gynaecologist thinks I still have about five years of good fertility ahead of me, so there's no immediate hurry. I’m still taking contraceptives. But I would like us to take the next step.”

“Shouldn't living together come before bonding?” Will asked. His head was starting to spin. “Mating… you want us to what? Spend the weekend *practicing*?”

“You could say that,” Hannibal said. He checked his watch. “I've been on suppressants for a very long time--I can expect to go into heat almost immediately. Certainly within 24 hours of the missed dose, probably sooner.”

“*Heat?”* Will said, with a stab of panic. He hadn't even considered that--just Hannibal's normally receptive self, only scented more fully, was enough to make his alpha hormones roar. “Shit, Hannibal, I'm not ready. I've never--”

Heat would mean he’d go into rut, his first ever. There was no question about it--they were already coupled, knew each other intimately. Will was practically primed for it. And he wanted it, too, which scared him more than anything. It was too soon, too unexpected. Will squeezed his eyes shut. Behind them all he could see were afterimages of familiar porn scenarios: intimidating, rough, big-shouldered alphas, loaded with more muscle than both Will and Hannibal combined, pounding away at squealing spread-eagled omegas. It was not something he’d ever really connected with; he’d thought he’d had more time to figure it out.

He opened his eyes again, instinctively looking to Hannibal for reassurance. His face told him a lot. It said that he understood Will needed a little time to work through his feelings. It said that though he wanted to go to Will, he wouldn’t until Will invited him. It said that he had absolutely no remorse about forcing the issue. It said that he wanted Will to take him upstairs right that second and fuck his brains out.

Will swallowed. His dick was starting to pay a little too much attention to Hannibal’s last argument and just then he didn’t particularly need its advice.

“The only thing you need concern yourself with is if it's something you want too.” By the counter, Hannibal shifted very slightly; a brief movement of restless unease. He was already a touch pink in the face. “If it is, you'll find the rest will come easily. You're an alpha, we're emotionally bonded. Things will take their course--all we have to do is enjoy it.”

Will nodded, irritated. “Okay, yes, I’m aware of all that,” he said. “But I just need… a little more time. And maybe some space, I’m feeling very confined here, in this chair, I need to-- Look, just go into the living room and sit down by the window. Don’t move once you’re there.”

Hannibal’s response was restricted to a slight incline of his head and a flaring of the nostrils. To leave he had to pass close by Will--he did so swiftly, causing a waft of heated scent to follow in his wake. It was growing stronger and more opulent; dark and bitter like rich chocolate, tempered with something metallic and savoury. Will’s dick twitched violently in response. His mouth watered. He pressed the heel of one hand to his groin and rested his forehead in the other.

“Goddammit,” he said, and punched the chair arm hard before getting up.

In the living room, he found Hannibal seated behind the desk. He’d loosened his tie and had undone the top two buttons of his shirt. His colour was high and his scent was thick in Will’s mouth. He must be uncomfortable in his well-fitted suit.

Good, Will thought vindictively. *That'll serve him right.*

He was uncomfortable in his own clothes too. He'd almost gone to the bathroom to make some adjustments but decided there was no point. Whatever he found in his underwear would probably dismay him further--*could he be engorged and ready for rut already?* he wondered, with growing alarm. And if he waited much longer they'd end up stuck in a feedback loop before they could finish talking. It would be a fait accompli before they'd even begun.

Hannibal was watchful, holding himself preternaturally still behind the desk. Only his eyes moved when Will began to pace, up and down by the door, following his progress.

"This is a big deal, right?" Will said. "They always say not to rush into it."

"They also give us suppressants so it's impossible for us to intimately know what *it* is," Hannibal said. He fished out a handkerchief from his pocket and dabbed it to his forehead. "The only thing we can do is jump in with someone we trust."

"Have you jumped in before?"

"Yes," Hannibal said. "Only once, when I was about your age. I thought I was above my omegan instincts and learned the hard way that I wasn't."

Will stopped dead. Hannibal came into sharp focus; everything else was fuzzy black. "That doesn't… sound good."

"It wasn't," Hannibal said. "But neither was it the worst thing which could've happened. And I learned the proper respect for my instincts and for the instincts of others."

"That *really* doesn't sound good," Will said, advancing slowly towards the desk. As soon as he realised he was doing it, he made himself stop and retreated back to the safety of the door.

"It is of no consequence now," Hannibal said. "What matters to me is only you and your instincts. Look how they invoke protectiveness in you about something which happened twenty years ago. Look how easily you command me out of my own kitchen. Regarding you, my instincts were telling me something and I wanted to be sure."

Will bit his lip, thoughtful. He was still angry at Hannibal but he knew he might as well be angry at water for being wet. Hannibal was, on occasion, infuriatingly unconventional.

He nodded, and turned to face him. "So you stopped taking your suppressants…"

Hannibal's face was soft. "And now I'm sure."

Will nodded again. The weight of his decision settled upon on him, light as silk yet unbreakable as steel.

"Fuck," he said, mostly to himself. "Guess I'm jumping in then."

*

A beat passed and neither of them moved.

Will cleared his throat. “If I so much as touch you here, we’re not going to make it to the couch, never mind the bed.”

That decided Hannibal. He rose from the desk and, as smoothly as was still possible, exited the room. Will heard to his soft tread ascending the stairs.

Will waited a few moments then stalked up after him, feeling absurd and increasingly light-headed. It was like he was acting in a role in a play--the hunter pursuing his wounded prey. Except he was as wounded as Hannibal, and he felt as much prey as he did huntsman. For the first time ever his biology was beginning to overtake him; his dick throbbing, eager, directing his actions. It had only been background noise before, adding a touch of piquancy to their encounters. A mild possessive thrill at fucking Hannibal, at pleasuring him with his dick, coming inside him. The equally enjoyable thrill of Hannibal’s weight on top of him, being filled and fucked, indecent and delicious. Not this need growing inside him--to claim, to *mate*.

And he had no idea what he was going to find in the bedroom. Downstairs, Hannibal had been affected but lucid, yet his heat could steal upon him quickly and take them both by surprise. Will had never witnessed a real omegan heat before: his sex-ed class had quickly glossed over it and it was frowned upon for a young alpha to ask too many questions. Maybe if Hannibal had given him some notice, he could’ve asked, could’ve been better prepared.

Will took a couple of deep breaths and opened the bedroom door. Hannibal had just finished undressing and his clothes were draped not-quite-neatly over the back of a chair. He bent over, straightening the towels he’d used to cover the bed. The ends of his hair were spiked with sweat; a drop ran the length of his spine, beginning from the lean muscle of his shoulder. The sight of it made Will’s teeth ache.

“I’ll get some of those special sheets for next time,” Hannibal said. “An oversight on my part.” Standing upright seemed to be causing him some trouble: he kept pausing to lean a hand on the bed, breathing heavily.

A frown creased Will’s forehead. “That doesn’t sound like you.”

Laboriously, Hannibal lowered himself onto the edge of the bed. His scent enveloped Will, causing a hazy warmth to stir in his belly. Will reached for him with caution, afraid of what might happen when they touched. But it was nothing like his secret fears--no aggression, no loss of self-control. He cupped Hannibal’s fever-hot face in his palms and felt only an intense tenderness.

Hannibal looked back at him, eyes veiled, glittering.

“Didn’t want to get your hopes up, did you?” Will said, sighing. “In case I didn’t want to go through with it.”

Hannibal said nothing out loud, but closed his eyes in silent admission. His expression was faintly pained.

“You idiot.” Will sighed again and looked at the bed, with its covering of exquisitely soft, eye-wateringly expensive Egyptian cotton towels. “This is something I very much want, which you would’ve known if you’d waited to talk to me first. Then we could’ve had fun planning and looking forward to it, and I wouldn’t feel so nervous.”

Hannibal nodded slowly, nudging his cheek further into Will's palm. It was as good as an apology as Will was going to get.

"We're going to ruin your towels, you know."

"We're probably going to ruin the bed as well," Hannibal said. "I'm resigned to its fate."

A slow grin stole up on Will. This was familiar, not so different to the imagined weekend he'd been looking forward to. "That's some real dirty talk, right there. Ready for me to ruin you too?"

Hannibal's eyes slid open, bright and piercing, and then Will was in his lap, kissing him, hands sliding straight up his ribs to his chest. His mouth was searing, lips sultry and already slick from Will's tongue. Will found his nipples; Hannibal jerked under him when he thumbed them. And the taste of him; familiar but new, intricate layers for Will to unpack. There was something mineral, like slate, and the salt-iron tang of warm blood, and something which reminded Will of the feel of soft ripe berries bursting on his tongue. He was dragging his teeth over Hannibal's wet plush lips, softly biting at them, when he remembered he still hadn't taken his clothes off.

It was a wrench to slide back, off Hannibal's lap. Will kept close, standing between his outspread thighs. "I feel like I've been spiked," he said, thumbing open his jeans. "I can taste things I shouldn't be able to taste. Like textures, and maybe other things, I don't know."

Hannibal hooked greedy fingers into Will's waistband and yanked his jeans down over his hips. "Bonding is a process which involves all the senses. It can cause a mild temporary synesthesia." He paused, scenting Will, pressing his nose along the firm ridge of his cock, still mostly wrapped in damp cotton. Will had to grip onto his shoulder hard and not watch. "To me you smell like you always do, only even more so. It's intoxicating, I could probably climax from that alone."

Will's eyes widened. "Fuck." He shoved Hannibal's hands away to frantically wriggle out of his jeans. "Why the fuck didn't I put on a dress this morning?" he complained, kicking them aside. "They're *much fucking easier* to get out of."

His T-shirt and shirt he pulled over his head. By then he was so hard he almost wanted to cry. His dick protruded from the waistband of his panties, bigger than he was used to. A steady trickle of fluid leaked sluggishly from the tip. Will peeled off the wet cotton and pushed his underwear down his thighs. Then he just stared, examining himself.

"Is this really all me?" He cupped the shaft in his palm, feeling the weight of his enlarged cock. It was at least three inches longer than he was used to and considerably thicker, especially around the head. The glans there were shiny and swollen; his balls uncomfortably full. It belonged to a fully-grown alpha, one approaching a rut.

Hannibal's face was rapt. He leaned in, tongue out, eyes half-closed.

Will groaned, and batted him away. "Come on, Hannibal. Not if you want me to fuck you."

Hannibal smirked and leaned back on his elbows, displaying himself perfectly. His own, perfectly ordinary cock nestled rigid on the slight softness of his stomach. "That won't be a problem for very long," he said. "Soon you won't have a refractory period at all."

"Oh god." Will covered his eyes. "In theory that sounds great but I'm starting to wonder if it isn't actually a cosmic torture device." He glanced at his dick again, straining upright heroically, defying

its considerable size.

“Fornicators in Dante’s second circle were condemned to spend eternity copulating without release,” Hannibal said. “Exhausted, they crawled like animals over the fetid floor, bodies piling up in a grotesquerie of the medieval erotic imagination.”

“Shut up, Hannibal--that really isn’t helping.”

Hannibal wasn’t remotely chagrined. But he held out his hand to Will, who took it grudgingly. He was gently pulled onto the bed beside him.

“The medieval church has long tried to warn us against following our natures,” Hannibal said. “It’s still doing it now. Think instead of European peasant traditions: they had a far more practical concern with the alpha phallus. To them it means abundance and protection. It was carved into apple trees and wassailing bowls, and over doors to guard against evil spirits.”

Though Will was somewhat comforted by this, he felt more astonishment than anything else. “How are you *still talking*?” he said.

Heat and scent were pouring off Hannibal; his chest was deeply flushed, his nipples peaked and ruddy. There was a growl crouched under Will’s tongue, ready to pounce, just from being so close. Hannibal looked plush, *ripe*.

Something shifted in Hannibal’s face, then. Slowly, Will became aware of how sharp his attention was, how hungry. He was wielding it at Hannibal like a weapon. And Hannibal… Hannibal was moving now, sliding into the centre of the bed, bending over. Presenting. *Submitting.*

Will scrambled onto the bed, right behind him--any preamble would’ve been a waste of time.

“God, you're *so fucking wet,*” he moaned. There was no need for lube now Hannibal’s suppressants had worn off, and he hadn’t even hit full heat yet. His inner thighs glistened, wet and slick. Will traced his hole with a finger; it came away coated with luscious juices. Will’s newly-muddled senses suggested peaches, drenched in syrup, or how the deep resonating sound of a bell might feel against his tongue.

Hannibal shuddered beneath him, tilting his hips higher. Will didn’t even have to lubricate himself--he just slid right into his wet heat. He was so open, *easy*. Will pushed in deep with one stroke and stayed there, luxuriating in the silken squeeze around his cock.

Hannibal made a sound, one somewhere between relief and plea. He writhed a little bit, too--only an abrupt, aborted movement, as if he were clinging on to the last of his self-control. Will drew slowly out and pushed smoothly back in again, forcing a soft grunted sigh out of Hannibal. He felt good; exquisitely in control, nerves humming in pleasant harmony. He’d expected to come almost immediately but that didn’t seem to be a danger now--the spot where his knot should be was sensitive as always but there was no sign of it swelling. Something welled from deep within the recesses of his brain; it told him he’d come when Hannibal was ready, and not before.

He fucked Hannibal in an easy, familiar rhythm, with the wet slap of their joining punctuated by Hannibal’s bitten-off sounds. Once, early on, Will remembered his new proportions and, with a guilty start, gentled his movements in case he caused Hannibal discomfort. But Hannibal’s sounds had stopped being bitten-off and had grown complaining. On a hunch that a little denial would tease him to the edge, Will kept doing it, fucking Hannibal harder and then slower, in a teasing

spiral of pleasure. Each time he slowed, Hannibal's complaints became louder and longer. He kept on until Hannibal's knuckles were fisted white above his head and the muscles of his back were taut with strain. Will soothed his palms over his flanks, nosed his way up to Hannibal's neck. His skin was burning with heat, his scent rich and warm. Every place they touched was slippery with sweat or slick or both. Will tasted his skin--the flavour of throbbing purple, laced with orange-blossom honey--and knew what was coming next.

When it happened, there was no mistaking it. Hannibal shivered beneath him as his heat peaked, his need becoming more and more acute. In response, Will's knot began to swell, slowly at first. Hannibal groaned when he felt it rubbing against him. He dug his knees into the bed and ground himself back on it.

"Ahhh," Will gasped. "Last chance if you want to back out."

The look Hannibal gave Will over his shoulder was fierce, near feral. "*Just fuck me*," he hissed.

His thighs were straining wide, ass tilting higher. It was easy for Will to thrust a little deeper, to ease himself inside. All at once, Hannibal went limp, succumbing to the intrusion gladly. The pressure on Will's knot made it expand further, bulging to its full proportions and locking them together. Hannibal groaned underneath him, trembling; Will was left draped over Hannibal's back, panting, teeth bared. Hannibal blinked at him, dazed, out of the corner of his eye before he slowly inclined his neck: an offering Will couldn't refuse. His blood roared in his veins--he seized the flesh of Hannibal's neck between his teeth and bit down hard. His hips jerked and bucked, nudging the blunt swelling of his knot even deeper inside. Hannibal cried out; Will felt a powerful grip around his cock, and then it was pulsing over and over, bringing him a wave of pleasure with each fresh ejaculation. Hannibal shuddered and groaned; they clung to each other, riding out their climax, until finally it slowed and subsided.

Will blinked the sweat out of his eyes and carefully withdrew. His cock slipped free, soft and knotless but still engorged with overheated alpha blood. A shocking amount of come followed, slipping down Hannibal's thighs, dripping onto the towels. His hole winked at Will, messy and used and inviting.

Hannibal turned his head with an effort, one cheek pressed to the towelling. His look at Will was both baleful and needy.

"Don't worry," Will said. "I'm not finished with you yet."

This was a new feeling. Will understood better now: Hannibal needed him to do this, it would be torture for him otherwise. He needed Will's relentlessness, his rapacious appetite. He needed to be fucked, over and over, until he was finally sated and could rest. Like a series of windows opening, Will's needs lined up suddenly and, at the centre of them all, was a simple command: *take care of your mate*.

His mate. Will smiled, reaching for Hannibal. He was so wet and open; Will slipped a finger inside, then three all at once. More mess slid out of him, globs of come and slick coating Will's fingers. Hannibal moaned, shifting restlessly, pressing back onto his hand. Will's other hand moved to his dick; he was starting to get hard again.

"You like that, huh?" he said. "Fuck, I could get my whole fist in you. But it's not my fist you want, is it?" He took his fingers away, squeezed Hannibal's ass cheeks, slapped one lightly. "Turn over, I want to see you."

Hannibal was a wreck: eyes glazed, hair stuck to his forehead. He pushed it up, out of his eyes. His cock lay soft on his stomach, the remains of an enthusiastic orgasm spattered across his chest. His gaze slipped down from Will's face to his huge and hardening cock like it was magnetised. Will smiled again. It seemed like something he should crow about but instead he had a feeling of uncomplicated happiness. There was something Hannibal needed and Will was able give it to him.

“No,” Will said, crawling up him. “You don’t want my hands or mouth or anything like that. You want me to fuck you, *mate you*. Pump you full of come. Don't you?”

Hannibal’s mouth opened a fraction; he looked like he couldn't speak. He nodded instead.

Will's hands were moving of their own accord, touching him everywhere. They slid up his ribs, over his stomach and chest, gently pinching his nipples, raking fingers through his chest hair. He found himself talking as he did, saying things he’d never imagined he’d say, especially not to someone like Hannibal. “Fuck, you gorgeous little-- You're incredible like this, smell so good I-- God, I'm gonna fuck you all weekend, make you mine, over and over…”

Hannibal had wrapped his legs around Will’s waist, pulling him down, angling his body so Will’s was brought close to where he needed it.

“God, you gorgeous little slut,” Will groaned. He was licking into Hannibal's mouth, sucking on his tongue, dipping his head to taste the sweat of his neck. There were red indentations still where his teeth had sunk in. He laved them with his tongue; bright berry flavours fizzed in his mouth. “Don't you talk? You couldn't stop talking before--is this how I make you stop?”

Hannibal looked pained. His mouth was still open but all that came out were needy pants of breath.

“Something you want?” Will smirked. He nudged forward, dragging the length of his cock between Hannibal’s come-streaked thighs. “You know, I always thought porn exaggerated all this. You're going to be such a mess when I've finished with you. You’re a mess now.”

Hannibal shut his eyes and made an effort to speak. His voice was creaky and hoarse like he hasn't used it for days. “They fake it.”

“Well, I knew that,” Will said. “I just assume all porn is fake, especially the heat stuff. Can't have porn actors actually bonding.”

Hannibal shook his head impatiently. Will hadn’t adequately grasped his meaning; he explained himself in broken breathless phrases. “An uncomfortable truth,” he said. “Sex and mating are the same. Not different. A lifelong commitment. We've found ways around it. But at the expense of our. Instincts.”

“A lifelong commitment?” Will breathed out slowly. “That's what you want?”

Hannibal nodded. Will leaned over, looking deep into his face. “Instincts,” he said, haltingly. “I want your instincts. Want to see. You.” He raised his hand and stroked Will’s cheek, his hair. “Beautiful. Mine.”

Will swallowed. He took hold of Hannibal’s hand and pressed his lips to its palm. “I want that too,” he said. “You’re so different like this, I-- God, let me take care of you.”

He lifted Hannibal's hips a little more, sliding backwards so the tip of his cock just grazed his entrance. One push was all it took to slip right back inside him. They both gasped in unison; Hannibal's thighs tightened around his waist. Will rocked into him slowly, watching his wordless pleasure, his undulating movements beneath him. He bent low to kiss him open-mouthed; his face, his chest, his lips.

"Can't take something like this back," he whispered. "Once you've been seen, you've been seen."

Hannibal reached for him, arms tight around Will's neck. His head was flung back on the bed, throat taut and exposed, mouth open.

It was much quicker this time. Will felt his knot tingling and pushed in deep before it could grow too large. He didn't bite down, either--it didn't seem necessary. Instead he grazed his teeth along Hannibal's jawline, nipping lightly at the tender skin underneath, tasting the simple rightness of Hannibal's sweat against his tongue. Hannibal tensed, his body clamped down around his cock. Will cried out, and came again in long, drawn-out pulses. Hannibal's cock lay soft on his belly--his orgasm came from somewhere else, body-deep, a kind of rapture even Will didn't think he could reach. He held Hannibal through it, feeling their bond growing; stronger and deeper, falling together in an endless embrace.

When it was over, Hannibal lay supine, eyes shut. Will was tempted to leave him there and let him rest but his newly-roused instincts told him differently. Here was a short interval before they'd need to mate again, and Will had to make good use of it.

Hannibal stirred when Will touched his cheek. "Bath?" he asked. Heat still radiated from him and his forehead was burning to the touch.

"I was just thinking that," Will said. "You should try to eat too, if you can. After."

Hannibal gave a grunt of agreement and tried to lever himself up. Will helped. Hannibal's own release streaked his belly and his thighs were sticky with come. Will expected at least a moue of distaste but Hannibal inspected the mess with an impassive and critical eye, like someone might assess a work still in progress. Will left him propped against the pillows and went to draw a bath.

Though the bathroom was close by, Will felt a twinge of unease about leaving Hannibal's side. The bed was visible through the open door; through it he could see Hannibal's bare legs and highly-arched feet, dusted golden in the lamplight. His scent carried into the room, richly bitter like coffee, viscous as honey. But Will still wasn't comfortable and his anxiety only subsided when he returned and found Hannibal lying on the bed exactly as he'd left him.

He was a little more wakeful, but tired. He leaned on Will's shoulder in the shower as they rinsed themselves clean, and in the tub dozed against Will's chest, the ends of his hair floating in the water like pale fronds of kelp. Will held him close, cherished and safe. Usually it was Hannibal who liked to wash Will's hair; Hannibal who provided the solidity so Will could close his eyes and drift, happy and sated and loved. The difference was touching, and there were tender new places in Will's heart. He poked at them as they lay in the cooling water, knowing they should get up and find something to eat.

All the time his instincts kept him alert, watchful; they told him he'd conquered, that he owned something precious now and had to protect it. Love was brutal; for generations people had died for it and would continue to do so, no matter how civilising the law or how advanced hormone

therapies became. The blood of more honest times still ran through their veins. Will picked up the sponge and pressed it with care to Hannibal's damp, hot forehead.

After their bath, Hannibal waited in a chair while Will stripped the bed of its soiled towels and replaced them with new ones. Hannibal watched, wrapped in a thick towelling robe, never letting his eyes leave Will's face.

"And you're sure you're okay?" Will asked for the tenth time, as Hannibal hobbled stiffly back to the clean bed.

"Perfectly fine," Hannibal said. "A little sore, like a low-grade fever. Completely normal, I promise."

Will crouched by his side, frowning. There was something he had to do but couldn't quite bring himself to. They both needed to eat, which meant at least one of them had to go downstairs to bring back some food. Which meant a temporary separation.

"In the refrigerator," Hannibal said, cutting into his thoughts. "There's food set aside. The meatballs only need a couple of minutes before turning--a splash of oil, a high heat. Use the cast iron skillet."

Will stared at him. He hadn't spoken his thoughts aloud. And neither he been encouraged to cook alone in Hannibal's kitchen before.

"There are frozen grapes in the icebox," Hannibal continued. "I think I could eat those. And some of the Cornilly maybe."

"So are you telepathic now, too?" Will asked.

"Only observant." Hannibal smiled. "You were frowning and touching your stomach. And you will be hungry, after exerting all that energy."

"Right," Will said, feeling like an idiot. "Of course. All these new feelings are messing with my head. It wouldn't seem strange if you did suddenly start reading my mind."

"New feelings, yes." Hannibal didn't elaborate. He simply shuffled back in the centre of the bed, robe held tight around himself, with an unhappy expression.

Pain gripped Will's heart. As if an invisible thread pulled him, he crawled across the bed to Hannibal. "Will you be okay if I go downstairs?" He had little choice--it was either that or starve his mate, which Will was pretty sure was an automatic 'fail' for a newly-fledged alpha.

Hannibal nodded. "Fine," he said. "Just…" His face distorted briefly, a flicker of private anguish passing over it before he brought it under control. He took Will's hand and folded it under his robe, pressing it to the centre of his chest. "Just don't be long. I'd come with you but…"

He trailed off again. Will understood and was glad he did--it would be too cruel to make Hannibal explain himself. There was a sharp feeling in the air around him, sharp and hot like shame. It wasn't Will leaving his side which caused him so much distress: it was the thought of leaving his den. Hannibal was deeply self-sufficient; it must be mortifying for him to suddenly be unable to leave the bedroom, and even more so if it barred him from his own kitchen.

Will kissed his forehead, breathing in the scent of his hair. “I’ll be five minutes,” he said. “Ten at the very most. And next time we’ll work something better out. Maybe we can keep some food up here then I won’t have to leave you. And--”

“And maybe a camping stove too,” Hannibal said. He sat up and gazed intently around the room. “Or something purpose built and hidden away. The kitchen I had in Paris as a student was tiny--a countertop folded over the hotplate when it wasn’t in use.”

Will laughed at him. “Well, you get to work on that while I fetch dinner. And I was wondering…” He looked around the floor for the clothes he discarded earlier. He found his t-shirt, tangled with the legs of a coffee table. “Would this help while I’m gone?”

Hannibal took it from him with an infinite amount of dignity. He held the shirt to his face with both hands and closed his eyes, then tucked it snugly inside his robe. The expression he wore practically dared Will to comment upon it.

Will found himself smiling uncontrollably. “I don’t think you realise yet how happy it makes me to see you need me that way.”

“Perhaps some of these instincts are stronger than I recalled,” Hannibal said. “And some I don’t remember at all. With hindsight it’s obvious: I didn’t adequately calculate for the effects of you.”

“Potent stuff, isn’t it?” Will knelt by his side again and looked deep into Hannibal’s eyes, feeling only a light and iridescent joy. He couldn’t stop grinning. “Way beyond love and into something else. I’d die for you and I’d kill for you, you know. And I’d feel nothing but righteousness.”

Hannibal’s eyes glittered in their dark depths; his face shone with love. The rest of him was breathlessly still.

Will ducked his head to kiss him one last time. “If I don’t go now, it’ll be too late,” he said, and slipped off the bed. Hannibal was still watching him, unmoving, as Will closed the door behind him.

Will raced down the stairs and into the kitchen. His heartbeat was loud in his ears, alerting him to the dangers of leaving his mate unattended. He breathed through it, trying to remind his instincts that Hannibal was safely in bed in his own enormous, castle-like house. Nothing was getting through his security system, and, more to the point, neither were there hordes of ravening alphas clamouring to get in. There was just Will and the austere emptiness of Hannibal’s kitchen.

He turned his focus towards speed--the faster he did everything, the quicker he could get back. He took the skillet from its cupboard and splashed it with oil, then fired up the burner and set the pan on it to heat. In the fridge, next to the meatballs, he found a container with something red in it and a note taped to the side. In immaculate copperplate, it read: *Heat this gently in a saucepan while the meatballs cook.* Will almost turned around--it was like Hannibal had spoken into his ear from behind him. He took it out of the fridge, smiling, and tried not to feel too exasperated that Hannibal thought it necessary to specify the use of a saucepan.

While the meatballs cooked and the sauce heated--a fresh tomato one, with flecks of cilantro--Will found the tray Hannibal used for breakfast in bed. In between poking at the meatballs, he set it out as Hannibal would have, with silverware and china and crisp white napkins. The log of Cornilly was under a glass dome in the fridge--he put the whole thing on a platter with a cheese knife, and then it was time to turn the meatballs and stir the sauce. A loaf of fresh rustic bread on the counter

drew his attention; his stomach growled. Quickly, he cut two slices and spread them thickly with butter. He was still eating them when he finished plating the food. Lastly, he grabbed the grapes out of the icebox and rushed the tray and everything on it back upstairs.

Hannibal was lying still on the bed, head turned towards the door. His nostrils flared and his eyes flew open when Will came inside. Will found himself grinning with relief; he had to force himself to walk the tray over and set it calmly down. Hungry as he was, eating was less important than pressing into Hannibal's warmth and scenting the juncture of his throat. Hannibal made a happy, uncomplicated sound and wound his arms tight around Will's waist; there was little need to talk.

After that, they cosied up on the bed to eat. Will scooped up sauce with more of bread, taking huge, ravenous bites, and in between fed Hannibal grapes with his fingers.

"There's really no need," Hannibal protested, taking another grape, but then ruining his own argument by holding Will's wrist fast and sucking with relish on the pad of his thumb.

Will laughed around a mouthful of meatball. "I'll stop doing it when you stop enjoying it."

Hannibal gave a long, defeated sigh. "You can understand why I haven't done this often," he said. "It was challenging enough to trust you with it."

"But no regrets?" Will asked. He wanted to ask about Hannibal's other time--what had happened and if Hannibal had been this soft and open then. But they were snug in the sacred space of their den and he was afraid to sully it with bad memories and his own overprotective instincts.

"None," Hannibal said. "And, no, we didn't get that far. I know you're wondering about it."

Will gave him a suspicious look. "Are you sure you're not telepathic?"

"Now you know what it feels like," Hannibal said. "Annoying, isn't it?"

Will broke into laughter. "You find it charming when I do it. And you also know it's not telepathy." He surveyed the tray; all that was left were half of Hannibal's grapes and all of the Cornilly. "Do you want some cheese? I do, I'm starving."

Will sliced off a chunk and ate it from the knife. Hannibal was thoughtful; half of him was somewhere else. He reached for the cheese and broke off a piece with his fingers.

"It's not impossible," Hannibal said, eating it slowly. "Maybe I have temporarily picked up a trace of your special gift. But then"--he snapped his gaze fully onto Will's face--"it's not hard to imagine what you might be thinking about."

"I wasn't sure if you'd want it bringing up," said Will. "Here and now, of all places."

"It was unpleasant," Hannibal admitted. "But I made him leave before we'd hardly begun and got through the rest of my heat on my own. Like I said, it could've been worse."

Perhaps it could've been but that didn't stop Will from squeezing Hannibal's hand tightly, a grim anger boiling within. Hannibal had acknowledged that his own arrogance had placed him there but Will couldn't stop thinking of the unknown other who, in Hannibal's words, had to be *made* to leave. How insistent had Hannibal needed to be to make that happen? And the whole time he would've been deep in his heat--locked into needing something he'd realised he didn't want.

Hannibal watched him quietly, his head tilted to one side. “What would you do,” he asked, “if he were here now? If anyone were here, uninvited?”

“I’d kill them,” Will said immediately, then paused. Hannibal hadn’t moved, hadn’t flinched. “I mean, I’d want to kill them. I’m not sure what I’d actually do.”

“It would be an extraordinary situation in this day and age,” Hannibal said. “Making it an even greater act of aggression. The exact type of situation, in fact, which has honed and developed our instincts over millennia.”

Will paused again before speaking. “You really want to know, don’t you? If I answer wrongly, just remember you’ve left it a bit late to change your mind about which alpha to hitch your horse to.”

Hannibal brought Will’s hand to his mouth and pressed his lips to it. “I hold no fears over my choice,” he said. “And there are no wrong answers, just differing degrees of honesty.”

Will glanced down at him. He’d made himself comfortable against a pile of pillows, snuggled in as if Will was about to tell him a bedtime story.

Will puffed out a held-in breath, rubbing the back of his neck. “Well…” He slowly took in the deep blue serenity of the room around them, now scattered with their scent-markings. They’d made it theirs; the place of their bonding, still fresh. He looked at the door and imagined it opening, admitting a stranger. Someone who wouldn’t leave. A threat.

“First of all,” he said, “they’d underestimate me, because everyone always does. I’m young and I’m below average weight for an alpha. On top of that, I’m physically male but I often make myself look more feminine. They’d assume I was weaker than I am.”

“But you’re anything but,” Hannibal said. “My fierce and beautiful mate.”

The interruption was oddly heartening. Hannibal’s eyes were shining: he was proud. And, with a sudden violent stab, Will felt how proud he was to be his.

He drew his thoughts back to the imaginary intruder. “I could probably talk anyone down, if I tried hard enough,” he said. “But in a case like that, I don’t know how useful empathy would be… Too much aggression, too many hormones. So I wouldn’t risk it. I’d go in hard, aim to shock them out of it. Maybe try to take a chunk out of them with my teeth, something they wouldn’t expect, something which would make them think twice.”

There was a silence; Will let the truth of his words settle into him. Once satisfied, he shrugged. “Whatever happened next would be up to them. This is my territory; I’d have a right to defend it.”

Hannibal’s fascination was total. “I’d have no fears with you on my side,” he said, reaching for Will, tugging him closer.

Will laughed to cover his blushes. He felt unexpectedly good, like he’d made a confession only to have been met with praise. “You’re not exactly helpless,” he said. “You’d be right there with me, heat or no heat.”

Hannibal wasn’t listening. He was too busy untying Will’s robe and sliding it back off his shoulders, freeing his chest, his belly, and finally his cock. Will straddled him, leaning down to press their mouths together. Hannibal’s opened at once, kissing him back hungrily.

“Is this turning you on?” Will grinned. “Does my hypothetical story end with me fucking you over someone’s prone and bloody body?”

He felt Hannibal’s long fingers finding his length, grasping it, feeling its weight. Hannibal unbelted his own robe; Will groaned and thrust gently over his bare stomach, smearing it with fluids.

“Of course,” Hannibal said, gazing up at him with a smile. “A mere omega couldn’t possibly react in any other way.” He twisted his wrist, making Will gasp.

“What do you want?” Will asked, leaning down over him. Hannibal’s arousal was thick between them; the thought of his slick, waiting heat made his dick throb with renewed urgency. “Anything, let me give it to you.”

“I want to taste you,” Hannibal said. “Kneel up, let me feel you on my tongue.”

With an effort, Will raised himself up. His cock protruded obscenely, just above Hannibal’s eager mouth, now too large to comfortably fit inside it. Hannibal didn’t seem to care; he cradled the head on his tongue, then slid it over his lips, leaving a sticky trail of Will’s pre-come behind. Licking them clean, he started to stroke himself firmly.

“In the nightstand,” he said, indicating the one on his side of the bed.

Will had to pull away from him to open the drawer. Inside was a dildo, a large fleshy one, wrapped in a silken cloth. It was one of the inflatable kinds, with a knot which could be pumped up with air.

Will raised an eyebrow. “Been practicing without me?”

“For emergencies only,” Hannibal said. “I thought it would allow us to widen our activities this weekend.”

Will frowned, unsure if he liked the idea. Hannibal didn’t need to ease the ache of his heat with this--he had Will. He held onto it a moment longer; the dildo looked pale and anaemic next to his own flushed and jutting cock. And it was smaller, he noted with no little amount of satisfaction.

Hannibal took it from him gently. “In case I need to remind you, the only knot I need is yours,” he said. “Let me show you what I mean.”

He flung his robe fully open and drew up his thighs. Will watched with a thudding pulse as he pushed the dildo easily inside himself. His face went slack with relief; with one hand he held it in place and the other he wrapped around Will’s cock. He squeezed lightly at the base, encouraging Will’s knot, and applied his mouth enthusiastically to as much of the rest as he could manage.

“Oh, *fuck.*” Will was beginning to get the idea. “You want me to--”

Hannibal drew back, his lips red and shiny. “Mark me,” he said, before straining up again to suckle the head. “Cover me in your scent.”

“Shit,” Will groaned. Of course--that was what the dildo was for. He would only come when Hannibal’s body signalled it was ready.

Hannibal was licking a stripe down his shaft, then sucking hard at the base, over his knot. Will felt it respond; but whether it was the heat and wetness of Hannibal’s mouth or simply the sensation, he didn’t know. The scent of Hannibal’s arousal was growing too, spurring it on. He put his fingers in

Hannibal's hair and gripped, lightly. Hannibal went still and allowed himself to be guided, let Will rub himself over his mouth and the flat of his tongue. There was a slippery, slick sound coming from somewhere below him: Hannibal fucking himself with the dildo. Will groaned and watched his mouth, wet and luscious, and his tongue, sliding over and around the swollen head.

Hannibal massaged his knot as it grew, opening his mouth wide to suck the very tip of his cock. His tongue was cushioned underneath when Will came--the force of it was so powerful Will had to pull back, shooting over his face, his chest, even into his hair. Hannibal was shuddering and gasping, licking glossy strands of come from his lips and from his fingers, still screwing the dildo deep inside himself. Will couldn't catch his breath. Then he was scrambling down to kiss Hannibal through it, his own release now clinging to his lips, his nose, his chin, and smearing it between them; and all the while Hannibal's eager mouth was still tasting him, still wanting more.

"It's like getting high," Will gasped. "Like getting high on you." He snatched up a towel from beside them, dabbing at his own and Hannibal's faces until they were mostly clean. His scent was left behind, though; strongly marked on Hannibal's skin. "God, I'm all over you, it's the hottest thing."

Hannibal nodded slowly, dreamily. He pulled Will down on top of him, so they lay chest-to-chest, and dragged his open mouth across Will's cheek. His fingers dug into Will's sides; his hips squirmed restlessly. The dildo was still plugged half-inside him.

Will laughed and kissed him. "So what now? Want me to repay the favour before I fuck you again?"

He got little response. Hannibal was beyond specifics; he just *needed* and it was up to Will to provide.

Will shuffled backwards down the bed and slid the dildo out. Hannibal whimpered; his thighs twitched and fell open, inviting.

"Just for a little while," Will said. "I won't let you go wanting, I promise."

He could smell Hannibal's need, his ache becoming profound. Will yearned to obey; to fill him and fuck him, but first he wanted to touch and taste. Just for a little while. His fingers traced the rim of his hole; Hannibal's heat and slick fluids were irresistible, pulling him in. Will pushed his face forward, between his thighs, and lapped deliberately with his tongue.

Hannibal cried out. His thighs were shaking, his stomach tense and trembling. Will ran his palms over his tired muscles, kneading and soothing. The taste under his tongue was direct and straightforward--salt, musk, sweat. Will probed the muscle of Hannibal's body and found it taut yet forgiving under his tongue. His cock ached, pulsing with the beating his heart. When he pushed himself upright again, it seemed to weigh heavier between his thighs, flushed dark and trailing a rope of clear liquid.

Hannibal blinked his eyes open and reached for him, for his thick swaying cock. Will nudged his thighs open wider and together they guided it inside Hannibal. Relief came first; Will sank forward and rested his forehead to Hannibal's chest. For the first time, he felt a flicker of the tiredness which would be his after it was all over. And Hannibal was quieter, more patient; he watched Will as he rocked into him, jolting him into the pillows. His face was serene and blissful, and his eyes gleamed with a glittering euphoria.

Will's thrusts became deeper, firmer; he let his body take over, the pace steady and regular. His knot grew slowly this time, shooting thrills of sensation through him as Hannibal writhed back on it. A peace descended on Will, building from somewhere within, and then expanding up and out, until his skin and hair and teeth tingled with sparks of pleasure.

"Fuck," Will panted. "Hannibal, I think… I think this is--"

Hannibal closed his eyes, head tipped back. A burst of ecstasy hit Will, shocking him into choking gasps. His knot was plugged deep, full and fat; he came hard, in long pulsing spurts, locked inside Hannibal. Will sought Hannibal's cock only to find a thin whitish release already clinging to the soft tip, but he was still climaxing, wringing everything out of Will that he had to give.

Will fell forward onto his elbows, feeling Hannibal's arms around him, holding him close. Lips ghosted his forehead, moving like they were whispering, but he couldn't make out any words. A few moments passed; Hannibal sighed, a long quiet sound, and went still. Will's hips juddered once more, then stopped.

The silence around them was loud and ringing. Will buried his face into Hannibal's neck, against his vital drumming pulse. He felt like he was floating, like they were floating, still joined. Maybe they were joined together forever. In his mouth welled the taste of spring; he leaned into the rising darkness, an earthy green dappled with shade. The last thing he remembered was the smell of damp grass warming in sunlight.

*

Hannibal groaned, still trapped half-underneath him. Will heaved himself clear then tucked himself into Hannibal's side. It felt too far away; he wanted to get closer. But climbing inside him was impossible so he'd have to make do.

Hannibal rubbed his eyes and yawned, stretching, testing his limbs one-by-one as if assessing them for damage. Finally, he edged himself partially upright and gazed down his torso, spattered with a kaleidoscopic pattern of body fluids.

"I'm confident that, if it weren't for the contraceptives, I'd be happily pregnant by now," he said. "Or *knocked up,* as you so delicately put it." He eyed Will, mouth quirked in a familiar amused fashion. "How do you feel?"

Will tried to roll onto his back but stopped, grimacing. "I feel like one bath isn't enough," he said. He looked down at the mess between them, stuck to the towels and each other. "That was… intense."

"Indeed," Hannibal said, hooking an arm across his chest and pulling him close. "One of the many benefits of having such a young and virile alpha."

It was Will's turn to yawn. "You're in a good mood," he said. "I must've done something right."

"You did everything right," Hannibal said. "My darling Will, my perfect mate." His head was buried in the pillow next to Will, his face mostly hidden by its folds. Only the corner of his smile was visible.

Will peered closer, trying to read more of his expression. Hannibal opened an eye and peered back.

“You’re probably going to feel a little anxious for a while,” he said. “Over-protective, concerned for me, for us and our little den. There’s no need to be. I’m happy and quite content.”

“Right.” Will settled down next to him, forcing himself to relax. “Yes, you’re right. It’s just a little unsettling--I thought I’d feel differently, after. Lighter.”

Hannibal raised his head, smiling gently. “Oh, you will. We haven’t reached ‘after’ yet--we’re still in the middle of it.”

“*Still?*” Will’s mouth dropped open. He put the back of his hand to Hannibal’s forehead--it was still hot.

“I told you,” Hannibal said. “It'll be the whole weekend, maybe longer.”

“But-- Did we not just--? What was *that*, if not…?”

“Mating?” Hannibal found his hand, kissed it, then tucked it under his neck. “Yes, you bred me very thoroughly. But the worst--or best, depending on your point of view--is probably over.”

“Probably?”

“Unless my body decides it needs to make sure. Even if it doesn’t there will be an increased need for physical closeness, which will lead to a slower, less frantic repeat of the last few hours.”

Will lay on his back, staring blankly at the ceiling. “We’d better get some more food prepped,” he said after a moment. Then he turned, frowning, to Hannibal. “My sex-ed class was woefully inadequate, you know. Twenty four hours, they said. No advice about what to put on the bed or preparing food in advance. And nothing at all about dildos or post-mating anxiety or how to handle your smug, well-fucked mate’s excessively good mood.”

Hannibal’s smile grew even wider. There was something uncomplicatedly sunny in it which made Will’s heart clench.

“Intense wasn’t quite the right word, you know. It’s not big enough. Not…” Will trailed off. The word he was looking for didn’t seem to exist.

“Tell me how you feel,” Hannibal said. “But answer me properly this time.”

Immediately Will thought of lying in the tub with Hannibal snug in his arms. He’d been truly vulnerable there. Even now, with him so warm and contented, it was almost unimaginable.

“I feel like you gave me a rare gift,” Will said. “And I still can’t quite believe it’s mine.”

A silence fell, like a polished stone into a deep well. Will was aware of Hannibal breathing; nothing else existed.

“It’s yours,” Hannibal said. “If you want it.”

On the pillow, his face was so close that their noses were touching. His smile had changed, becoming fragile but hopeful.

“I want it,” Will said. “Of course I do. More than anything.”

He nudged his mouth forward a fraction, finding Hannibal's waiting for him. Their kiss was soft and sweet.

"So, five years, then?" Will said. "Might not be bad thing if we get more chances to practice this weekend."

Hannibal said nothing. Will drew back to see him more clearly.

"You were serious about that, right? About wanting a baby?"

Hannibal smirked. "Well, now that I've confirmed you're capable of it."

Will slapped his arm. "I'm serious, it's your turn to answer me properly."

Hannibal paused, savouring his response. "Our child would be one I'd like to meet," he said after a beat. "Don't you agree?"

Will took a moment to picture it. The concept seemed alien and familiar, all at once. He broke into a grin. "Poor kid," he said. "I know what you're picturing--literate at age two, Euclid at six, with empathetic superpowers on top. She's not gonna stand a chance."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "She?"

"Of course," Will said. "Bet you twenty dollars we have a girl."

"Ah," Hannibal said. "But I'd rather not bet against that--it sounds quite perfect. Think of all the arguments we could have over her wardrobe and the amount of money I plan to spend on it."

"Domestic bliss," said Will, laughing. "But remember we're still just practicing for now. There are a couple of things I'm not sure I got the hang of."

"Practice makes perfect," Hannibal said. "I'll clear my diary for next month, shall I?"

Will didn't need to answer. It was obvious to them both that Hannibal could take his agreement for granted. Instead he kissed him again, remembering the sweet taste of spring; a new life awaited them and it had already begun.

End Notes

I usually try to name Quicksilver fics after songs by 60s girl groups - the title for this one comes from the unbelievably perfect *(Love is Like A) Heatwave* by Martha and The Vandellas.

Will's temporary synesthesia is a little wonky and isn't meant to accurately portray the condition - the associations it causes in RL are a lot more random and a lot less suggestive.

And no, Dante didn't say that about fornicators, but I spent far too long wondering what the medieval church would make of a/b/o dynamics and I wanted to use some of it BECAUSE HANNIBAL XD

I'm on tumblr and twitter (and very occasionally on pillowfort and dreamwidth).

I also write my own fiction which you can learn more about here.

For a complete list of all the stories and for easy viewing of all the art, we made a QS website. And please do go leave TheSeaVoices kudos for the illustration HERE :)

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!